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The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

COMMISSIONER

OF

STATE AID AND PENSIONS

FOR THE

YEAR ENDING NOVEMBER 30, 1929



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Office of the Commissioner of State Aid and Pensions,

State House, Boston, January 7, 1930.

To the Honorable Senate and the House of Representatives:

I herewith submit to your honorable bodies the annual report of the Department of State Aid and Pensions, in conformity with the requirements of Chapter 115, Section 2, General Laws, the part relating to State and Military Aid and burials being for the year 1928, and that portion relating to pensions covering the year 1929.

Very respectfully,

RICHARD R. FLYNN,

Commissioner.

REPORT

State and Military Aid and Burial Expenses.

Disbursements of State and Military Aid to soldiers, sailors and marines of the Civil and Spanish Wars, the Philippine Insurrection, the Mexican Border Service and the War with Germany, and their dependents, and for the burials of soldiers, sailors and marines of the Civil and Spanish Wars, the Philippine Insurrection, Indian Campaigns, Mexican Border Service, and the War with Germany, and their wives, widows, and dependent fathers and mothers, and army nurses, by 289 cities and towns in the Commonwealth during the year 1928,—reimbursement being due and payable to the disbursing municipalities on or before November 10, 1929,—were as follows:

| | |
|--|--------------|
| State Aid to soldiers and dependents, Civil War | \$133,819.00 |
| State Aid to soldiers and dependents, War with Spain | 14,256.00 |
| State Aid to soldiers and dependents, Philippine Service | 2,202.00 |
| State Aid to soldiers and dependents, German War Service | 8,415.50 |
| Military Aid to soldiers and sailors, Civil War | 858.00 |
| Military Aid to soldiers and sailors, War with Spain | 3,508.25 |
| Military Aid to soldiers and sailors, Philippine Service | 652.50 |
| Military Aid to soldiers and sailors, Mexican Border Service | 1,235.00 |
| Military Aid to soldiers and sailors, German War Service | 33,959.55 |
| Burial expenses of soldiers and their dependents | 9,113.98 |
| Total for 1928 | \$208,019.78 |

STATE AID

The total number of State Aid recipients, Civil War, for 1928, was 2117, classified as follows:—

Soldiers, 365; decrease, 128.
Wives, 6; decrease, 3.
Widows, 1726; decrease, 273.
Mothers, 0; decrease, 1.
Children, 20; increase, 3.
Total, 2117.

Net decrease of recipients during 1928, 402.

Average cost to State per person aided, \$63.21+.

The total number of State Aid recipients, Spanish War, for 1928, was 235, classified as follows:—

Soldiers, 60; increase, 17.

Wives, 3; increase, 1.

Widows, 143; decrease, 1.

Mothers, 28; decrease, 1.

Army nurses, 1.

Total, 235.

Net increase of recipients during 1928, 16.

Average cost to State per person aided, \$60.66+.

The total number of State Aid recipients, Philippine Insurrection Service, for 1928, was 41, classified as follows:—

Soldiers, 20; increase, 8.

Widows, 15; increase, 2.

Mothers, 6; increase, 3.

Total, 41.

Net increase of recipients during 1928, 13.

Average cost to State per person aided, \$53.70+.

The total number of recipients of State Aid, War with Germany, for 1928, was 195, classified as follows:—

Soldiers, 18; increase, 9.

Wives, 4; increase, 3.

Widows, 123; increase, 73.

Mothers, 10; decrease, 1.

Fathers, 1.

Children, 38; increase, 10.

Army nurses, 1.

Total, 195.

Net increase of recipients during 1928, 94.

Average cost to State per person aided, \$43.15+.

MILITARY AID

Military aid to the amount of \$40,213.30, an increase of \$4,045.85 from 1927, was disbursed as follows:—

Civil War soldiers, 7; decrease, 7.

Spanish War soldiers, 49; decrease, 5.

Philippine Insurrection soldiers, 12.

Mexican Border Service soldiers, 9; increase, 1.

German War soldiers, 333; increase, 38.

German War army nurses, 1; increase, 1.

German War Yeoman F., 1; increase, 1.

German War, Electrician, F., 1; increase, 1.

CIVIL WAR:—Amount expended, classes 1 and 2 \$858.00

Average cost to State per person aided, 122.57+.

Amount expended, classes 3 and 4, none.

SPANISH WAR:—Amount expended, classes 1 and 2 \$3,168.25

Average cost to State per person aided, \$66.00+.

Amount expended, classes 3 and 4 \$340.00

Average cost to State per person aided, \$340.00.

PHILIPPINE SERVICE:—Amount expended, classes 1 and 2 \$652.50

Average cost to State per person aided, \$54.37+.

Amount expended, classes 3 and 4, none.

MEXICAN BORDER SERVICE:—Amount expended, classes 1 and 2 \$1,235.00

Average cost to State per person aided, \$137.22+.

Amount expended, classes 3 and 4, none.

GERMAN WAR SERVICE:—Amount expended, classes 1 and 2 \$33,959.55

Average cost to State per person aided, \$101.07+.

Amount expended, classes 3 and 4, none.

Total \$40,213.30

Burial Expenses of Soldiers, Sailors and Marines, their Wives, Widows, Dependent Mothers and Fathers, and Army Nurses, under Sections 19 to 21, Chapter 115, General Laws, as amended by Chapters 262 and 266, Acts of 1924, Chapter 155, Acts of 1926, and Chapter 226, Acts of 1927.

During the year 1928, 111 claims were approved at an expense to the Commonwealth of \$9,113.98, classified as follows:—

| | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Civil War:— | Philippine Insurrection:— |
| Soldiers, 38; increase, 16. | Soldiers, 1; increase, 1. |
| Wives, 0; decrease, 2. | Total, 1. |
| Widows, 57; increase, 11. | German War:— |
| Total, 95. | Soldiers, 5; increase, 2. |
| Spanish War:— | Wives, 2; increase, 2. |
| Soldiers, 7; increase, 5. | Total, 7. |
| Wives, 0; decrease, 1. | Indian Campaigns:— |
| Widows, 0. | Soldiers, 1; increase, 1. |
| Mothers, 0. | Total, 1. |
| Total, 7. | |

Net increase during 1928, 35.

Average burial cost to State per person, \$82.10+.

TOTAL PAYMENTS OF STATE AID

| | | |
|---|--------------|-----------------------|
| The total payments by the Commonwealth for State and Military Aid and burial of indigent soldiers and sailors, including appropriations made by the General Court toward maintenance and improvements of the Soldiers' Home in Massachusetts, and on account of special laws, from 1861 to the close of 1928, were. | | \$51,106,490.82 |
| State and Military Aid and burial of soldiers and sailors on account of 1928, paid in 1929 | | 208,019.78 |
| | | <hr/> \$51,314,510.60 |
| Less refunds on account of payments of State and Military Aid and burials | | 1,007.00 |
| | | <hr/> \$51,313,503.60 |
| Special Laws: | | |
| Chapter 127, Acts 1928, paid in 1929 | \$5,795.63 | |
| Chapter 340, Acts 1929 | 5,394.50 | |
| Soldiers Home, 1929 | \$208,000.00 | 219,190.13 |
| | | <hr/> |
| Total November 30, 1929 | | \$51,532,693.73 |

BOUNTIES AND GRATUITIES

| | | |
|--|---------------|-----------------|
| Total payments of bounties on account of soldiers in Civil War to date | | \$17,872,859.82 |
| Gratuities (Acts 1912, Ch. 702; Acts 1913, Chapters 105 and 443) | 572,250.00 | |
| Gratuities (General Acts 1919, Chapters 283 and 342) | 18,517,016.99 | \$36,962,126.81 |
| | | <hr/> |
| Total November 30, 1929 | | \$88,494,820.54 |

Chapter 160, Acts of 1929, which went into effect June 26, 1929, amended the Soldiers' Relief law so as to make it possible for the veteran or his dependent to receive aid in the city or town of residence within the Commonwealth, when the place of legal settlement delayed unreasonably in granting the required assistance. The requirements of notice as set forth in Chapter

171, Acts of 1919, must be complied with, and the place of residence can pay only on the order of the Commissioner of State Aid and Pensions. There is nothing in the law, however, that prevents the place of residence from paying Soldiers' Relief to cases not legally settled in such place, if convenience or necessity requires it, provided that the city or town of legal settlement makes the necessary arrangements for payment and reimbursement.

This act is printed below.

CHAP. 160.

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE PROMPT PAYMENT OF SOLDIERS' RELIEF IN CERTAIN CASES.

Section seventeen of chapter one hundred and fifteen of the General Laws, as amended by chapter three hundred and eight of the acts of nineteen hundred and twenty-seven, is hereby further amended by striking out the second paragraph and inserting in place thereof the following:—

If an applicant for military aid or soldiers' relief has a settlement outside of the town where the application is made, the official required to act thereon shall, within three days, notify the corresponding official in the town of the applicant's settlement, and also the commissioner. If the town of settlement of an applicant for soldiers' relief unreasonably delays in aiding the applicant after receipt of said notice, the town of the applicant's residence shall forthwith grant such aid as the commissioner may order, and the town so granting such aid shall be reimbursed in full therefor by the town of the applicant's settlement. Any town official required to act on such order of the commissioner who refuses and neglects to comply therewith shall be punished by a fine of not less than twenty-five nor more than one hundred dollars. *Approved March 27, 1929.*

Chapter 340, Acts of 1929, makes provision for hospital or home care of needy Civil War veterans, their wives and widows. This law became operative August 22, 1929, and has already demonstrated the wisdom of its passage. While our State and Military Aid and Soldiers' Relief laws aim to give adequate support and care, it was often found that municipalities had not made ample provisions in their budget to care for extraordinary cases that necessitate considerable expense for support, nursing and medical treatment. This law arranges to have the application forwarded by the city or town of legal settlement, on special forms, to the Commissioner of State Aid and Pensions, and the amount authorized by the Commissioner is paid directly to the beneficiary from the office of the State Treasurer and Receiver General on an order from the State Comptroller. One-half of the expense is assessed the city or town of the beneficiary's settlement, to be paid to the State Treasurer at the same time as State taxes. The following is a table noting the class of beneficiaries and the amounts paid each month under the law:—

| 1929 | Soldiers | Widows | Number of cases | Amount |
|-----------|----------|--------|-----------------|-----------|
| September | 2 | 20 | 22 | \$ 866.50 |
| October | 4 | 42 | 46 | 2070.00 |
| November | 7 | 51 | 58 | 2458.00 |
| December | 10 | 60 | 70 | 3008.00 |

| | |
|----------------|-----------|
| Total to date, | \$8402.50 |
|----------------|-----------|

I deem it advisable to print below a copy of the law relating thereto.

CHAP. 340.

AN ACT TO PROVIDE HOSPITAL OR HOME CARE FOR NEEDY CIVIL WAR VETERANS, THEIR WIVES AND WIDOWS.

Chapter one hundred and fifteen of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding at the end thereof, under the caption, "HOSPITAL OR HOME CARE", the following new section:—*Section 25.* The commissioner shall expend such sum as he deems necessary to provide special care in a hospital or at home for persons who served in the army or navy of the United States in the war of

the rebellion and received an honorable discharge from all enlistments therein, their wives and widows, who are in need of such care and who were legally settled in a town of this commonwealth on January first, nineteen hundred and twenty-nine. The amount expended by the commissioner under this section shall be paid from such appropriation as may be made for the purpose. One half of such expense shall be assessed, collected and paid over by the town of the beneficiary's settlement to the state treasurer in the same manner and at the same time as state taxes. The person charged with disbursing military aid or soldiers' relief in each town shall, within three days of receiving an application for relief under this section, notify the commissioner of such application upon blanks approved by him. Any person charged with such disbursement who refuses or unreasonably neglects to give notice required by this section within the time and substantially in the form herein required shall be punished by a fine of twenty-five dollars. (*Approved May 24, 1929.*)

With reference to Chapter 280 of the Acts of 1928, entitled the "Spanish American War Reimbursement Fund", the amount of \$191.99 was expended in 1929, and there is \$141.02 now available from this fund. On February 1, 1930, there will be received by the State Treasurer \$170 to be added to this amount.

We are very much indebted to the U. S. Veterans' Bureau at Washington, D. C., and its Regional Office in Boston, for their ever ready and genuine co-operation. The benefits derived by the veterans and dependents from such co-operation are inestimable, and result in a genuine saving to the Commonwealth as well as a satisfaction to the beneficiaries.

PERSONNEL

It is with a great deal of regret that I have to report the decease on September 23rd last of Eugene D. Sanborn, Head Social Worker in this Department. Mr. Sanborn was the last survivor of the many Civil War veterans who served in this office. He was faithful and painstaking, and rendered excellent service to the Commonwealth as Agent and in the position he held at the time of his death.

Mr. Andrew Fyfe, a veteran of the World War and Social Worker in this office, was appointed to the position of Head Social Worker vice Eugene D. Sanborn deceased.

Col. Frank P. Williams, Chief Surgeon of the Commonwealth, with his office assistants, is continuing the same excellent service he has given us in the past relative to the physical examination of veterans of the various wars seeking military aid or admission to our State Soldiers' Home. He has also helped us by his professional advice in the cases of veterans applying for U. S. pensions, whose disabilities were difficult to diagnose or where they were unable to pay for a thorough medical examination in order to determine the disability alleged in their pension declarations.

We are receiving the same prompt and courteous service in all matters dealing with the medical and Home Service Sections of the U. S. Naval Hospital in Chelsea, and the U. S. Veterans' Hospitals at Rutland, Bedford, Northampton, which results in speedy action on claims where the applicants receiving treatment in the above hospitals have petitioned for Military Aid or Soldiers' Relief.

Our Agents made 4,066 house calls on veterans and their dependents; 516 applicants were visited at Veterans' Hospitals within the State; 258 Soldiers' Relief appeals received from aggrieved veterans and their dependents were investigated; 6 visits were made at homes to execute pension papers where the veteran or widow was physically unable to visit this office; 4 visits were made to complete burial claims, and 110 investigations were made relative to home or hospital care under Chapter 340, Acts of 1929.

PENSION DEPARTMENT

The following is a statement in detail of the business of this office for the year ending December 31, 1929:—

Classification of Claims filed during the Year.

| | |
|---|--------------|
| Soldiers (General Law), Original | 31 |
| Soldiers (General Law), Increase | 26 |
| Soldiers (Act May 1, 1920), Civil War, Increase | 39 |
| Soldiers (Act July 3, 1926), Civil War, Increase | 19 |
| Soldiers (Act May 1, 1926), Spanish War, Original | 412 |
| Soldiers (Act May 1, 1926), Spanish War, Increase | 675 |
| Soldiers (Act March 3, 1927), Indian Wars, Original | 11 |
| Soldiers (Act March 3, 1927), Indian Wars, Increase | 9 |
| Widows (General Law) | 12 |
| Widows (Act May 1, 1920), Civil War | 83 |
| Widows (Act July 3, 1926), Civil War | 2 |
| Widows (Act May 1, 1926), Spanish War | 98 |
| Widows (Act March 3, 1927), Indian Wars | 7 |
| Minors (General Law) | 1 |
| Wives (Act March 3, 1899), One-half Pension | 5 |
| Mothers | 3 |
| Fathers | 1 |
| Helpless children | 1 |
| Guardians | 14 |
| Reimbursement | 63 |
| Unendorsed checks | 27 |
| New pension certificate | 1 |
| Certificate in lieu of lost discharge | 2 |
| Application for change of name | 1 |
| Application for six months gratuity | 1 |
| Total | 1544 |
| Number of claims allowed | 1075 |
| Number of claims rejected | 321 |
| Amount collected | \$100,356.35 |

In addition to the above, we are often called upon to execute affidavits for persons who have filed pension claims through other attorneys, and to advise as to the method of procedure in order to complete the cases, all of which does not appear in the above summary or in our office records. This department is maintained primarily for soldiers, sailors, and their dependents having a residence in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. A great many inquiries regarding United States pension laws are received from persons residing in other States, however, and prompt and careful attention is given every communication. We execute vouchers in cases where payment is made to the guardian or conservator, and also in cases in which the pension is divided between the soldier and his wife. These vouchers are executed on or after the fourth of each month. A number of Civil War claims for increase of pension to \$90 per month have been received. In cases where the pensioner is in receipt of \$72 per month no formal application is required, but a request for the \$90 rate accompanied by medical evidence showing that the claimant is totally helpless or blind must be forwarded to the Pension Bureau. In relation to the above, the words "totally helpless" mean inability to feed oneself, to sit up, put on or take off a garment, or walk at all; in short, a bed-ridden or equally disabling condition. There is no expense to the claimants for prosecution of claims, blanks or postage.

There has been no pension legislation during the year 1929 that has materially affected the duties of the office.

The thanks of this Department are due Colonel Winfield Scott, former United States Commissioner of Pensions, and his successor, Colonel Earl D. Church, and all their office staff for their hearty co-operation and painstaking attention given in the prosecution of claims filed.

The commissioner takes pleasure in acknowledging the courtesies extended to him and through him to the Commonwealth by the officials of the Pension Bureau at Washington, D. C., on the occasion of his visits during the year.